

many who were once Israel's sworn enemies—Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinians—29 leaders came together, 13 of them from Arab countries. There were Israel neighbors, there were other Arab nations, nations from Europe, North America, and Asia. All have long labored for peace. All are now united against the terror aimed at Israel.

They came to support with deeds as well as words the peace process and the restoration of security and new efforts against terrorism. Only a few years ago, such a meeting would have been inconceivable. Only a few weeks ago, such a meeting would have been hard to imagine. Just a few days ago, this remarkable meeting was put together.

The leaders of this area have met only a handful of times, and then always to celebrate events on the road to peace. But today they met in common cause to take action to confront the urgent threat of terrorism, to show that Hamas, Hezbollah, the Islamic Jihad will not succeed in killing the peace.

Now many of Israel's neighbors in the region have demonstrated that they share your desire for peace, and they understand that extremist violence is also their enemy. The nations that met in Sharm al-Sheikh sowed the seeds for a new cooperation, to build peace and to confront those who would destroy it. The Middle East is changing; we must not, we will not let terror reverse history.

Sharm al-Sheikh was a beginning. Tomorrow we will press forward when I and senior administration officials meet with the Prime Minister and his key security advisers. We will discuss concrete steps the United States can take to help the IDF and the Israeli police defeat those who would murder and maim. No one takes greater personal risks on behalf of peace than the brave men and women of Israel's security forces, like those who are standing here. America is determined to support them in every way and to provide them with the means they need to prevail against extremism and violence.

I have visited this beautiful and holy land before. I have celebrated the great event on the road to peace. I have mourned Prime Minister Rabin. Today I come again in sorrow but also in determination with this message from the American people: The United

States stands more strongly than ever, shoulder-to-shoulder, with Israel. We will work with you as you strive for a secure peace. We will stand by your side until Israelis come to know that peace with security within this land is a reality, "until," in the words of the prophet, "the voice of joy and the voice of gladness are heard again in the cities and the hills of Israel."

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:21 p.m. at Ben-Gurion Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Sheval Weis, Speaker of the Knesset.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Ezer Weizman of Israel and an Exchange With Reporters in Jerusalem, Israel

March 13, 1996

The President. Let me say that it is a great honor to be back at the President's house and with the President again. And along with the Prime Minister, we were able to give a report on our impressions of what happened at Sharm al-Sheikh today and what the significance of it was, and then we talked a little bit about the challenges ahead. We spent about an hour in a very good discussion, and as always when I'm with the President, I learned a lot and I leave with a lot of food for thought.

But I feel much better about our prospects for presenting a united front against terror and for security and therefore creating and maintaining conditions under which the peace process can proceed than I did before I went to Sharm al-Sheikh today. And I thank the Prime Minister for his work, and I say again, I came here more than anything else just to once again express the solidarity of the United States with Israel, grief at your loss, and our determination to do what we can both to restore your security and to preserve the march of peace.

Israeli Capital

Q. President Clinton, do you have any reflections on President Weizman not going to the airport, obviously intending thereby to demonstrate Israel's historic commitment to Jerusalem being its capital, a position that

you endorsed yourself during your campaign but we haven't heard much from you on since? Do you have any feeling about that situation you'd like to share with us?

The President. No, my feeling is what it has been ever since the first agreement was reached in which Israel and the Palestinian Authority agreed that that would be part of the final negotiations. And the United States agreed that we would support the process that Israel had fashioned. And that's what I intend to continue to do. I haven't changed my position on anything. I just—I believe that we are a partner in a process that primarily affects the Israelis and the neighbors of Israel, and we ought to support the process that the parties agreed to for resolving all those matters.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 p.m. at President Weizman's residence. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel in Jerusalem March 14, 1996

Prime Minister Peres. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, under the administration of President Clinton, this is the fourth important move that took place in the Middle East. The first was the agreement, the first agreement with the PLO; then the agreement with Jordan; then the second agreement with the PLO; now the fourth agreement in the Middle East to confront terrorism.

Those are events that exceeds any normal political achievement. The Palestinian conflict looked like insolvable. The Jordanians were not quick at the beginning to make peace, and then it became a great success. Then we have encountered the danger to all these three achievements by the acts of terror. In my eyes, President Clinton is the first world leader that put on the agenda peace in our time as the major goal.

If you look back at history, most of the time was spent on wars, on cold wars, on confrontations. It was a chance for the first time to escape all the bitter histories of blood

and terror. And then we have encountered again another uninvited and unprecedented problem: how to go ahead with peace when you have acts of terror. I think yesterday a foundation was laid down to do both; namely to go ahead with peace and reject terror. I tell you, Mr. President, that in our eyes, you, your administration, the American Congress, have changed the whole destiny of the Middle East.

The importance of the Middle East is not just because it has produced religions and Bible, the importance of the Middle East that, in our times, it is the first testing ground to take many conflicts that were so difficult to solve and try to solve them. If we shall succeed, I think it may serve as the model to other places.

For us, President Clinton is really a great leader, but not less than that, a moving friend. He has a tear in his eyes when we go through a difficult period of time, and we have a tear in our eyes when we are listening to his reaction and involvement. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Clinton. Thank you. First, I would like to express my appreciation to the Prime Minister and his Cabinet for the meeting that we had this morning just before coming over here to discuss the situation with regard to terrorism and the recent bombings. We have decided that the United States and Israel will immediately begin negotiations to conclude a bilateral agreement on combating terrorism. I told the Prime Minister that the United States will commit more than \$100 million to this effort.

I am taking this step because I am determined that we must have every tool at our disposal to fight against extremist violence. Last night I sent to the Congress an urgent request for the first installment of this counterterrorism effort. I expect Congress to act quickly on this important measure. The agreement will strengthen our attack on terror in three important areas.

First, the United States will immediately begin to provide Israel with additional equipment and training. Second, our nations will join together to develop new antiterror methods and technologies. Third, we will work to enhance communications and coordination between our nations, as well as other govern-